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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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NIRO SCAVONE HALLER & NIRO
ROBERT P GREENSPOON
181 W MADISON SUITE 4600
CHICAGO, IL 60602

EXAMINER

LUDWIG, MATTHEW J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2178

DATE MAILED: 04/05/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/653,840

Applicant(s)

BERIKER ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew J. Ludwig

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 March 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications. Request for reconsideration filed June 2, 2004.
2. Claims 1-5 are pending in the case. Claim 1 is an independent claim.
3. Claims 1-5 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pulliam in view of Barrett.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. **Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pulliam et al., USPN 6,609,108 filed (4/4/2000) in view of Barrett et al., USPN 6,400,381 filed (6/11/1999).**

In reference to independent claim 1, Pulliam teaches:

A consumer desiring to purchase a product first selects and configures the product as desired based upon available product features or options. Dealer inventory and "in-process" product inventory are then searched to locate products that matched or substantially matched the consumer selected product configuration (compare to "*receiving a search criterion from a customer for producing search results*"). See column 6, lines 8-15.

The consumer is then notified that a product has been located and tagged, and may be further notified that the actual purchase or delivery of such product may be conditioned, for

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example, upon payment or credit verification (compare to “***obtaining and transmitting the search results to the customer***”). See column 6, lines 25-35. The reference provides a reasonable suggestion of both receiving a search criterion and transmitting results of a search criterion to a user. The reference fails to disclose an invitation to be included in the target list related to the search criterion. The Examiner respectfully points out the deficiency in the description of how the target list is constructed or how it is related to the search criterion. Pulliam discloses a report process routine for communicating customer trends, preferences, and other customer-related data; however, the reference does not provide a suggestion of an invitation to be included in the target list related to the search criterion.

Barrett teaches a method for promoting social interaction among computer users displaying similar historical activities on the World Wide Web. Furthermore, the reference discloses activities, which could include particular query terms input to a search engine. A communication grouping is established when the activities of a client computer matches the activities of one or more companion client computers. If there is a match, the chat server notifies the client applets of each client computer in the communication grouping for display (compare to “***transmitting to the customer an invitation to be included in the target list related to the search criterion***”). See column 5, lines 25-67 & column 6, lines 1-36. Because the claim limitations are to be given their broadest reasonable interpretation within the scope of the art, the notification means supplied by the server provides a reasonable suggestion of an invitation sent to users based on similar activities. It would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Pulliam and Barrett before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the user preference methods taught by Pulliam to include the notification means of Barrett, because

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it would have provided users a way to chat about various products and would have provided the benefit of a personalized sense of community among both manufacturers and customers.

In reference to dependent claim 2, Pulliam teaches:

The consumer is then notified that a product has been located and tagged, and may be further notified that the actual purchase or delivery of such product may be conditioned, for example, upon payment or credit verification. See column 6, lines 25-30. The reference discloses contact information requested of the customer based on the acceptance of the purchased product; however, it fails to disclose an acceptance based on the invitation to be included in the target list. Barrett teaches a method for promoting social interaction among computer users displaying similar historical activities on the World Wide Web. Furthermore, the reference discloses activities, which could include particular query terms input to a search engine. A communication grouping is established when the activities of a client computer matches the activities of one or more companion client computers. If there is a match, the chat server notifies the client applets of each client computer in the communication grouping for display (compare to “transmitting to the customer an invitation to be included in the target list related to the search criterion”). See column 5, lines 25-67 & column 6, lines 1-36. Because the claim limitations are to be given their broadest reasonable interpretation within the scope of the art, the *notification* means supplied by the server provides a reasonable suggestion of an *invitation* sent to users based on similar activities. It would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Pulliam and Barrett before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the user-preference methods taught by Pulliam to include the notification means of Barrett, because it would have

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provided users a way to chat about various products and would have provided the benefit of a personalized sense of community among both manufacturers and customers.

In reference to dependent claim 3, Pulliam teaches:

The consumer may be warned that there is a possibility that the vehicle has been tagged or sold to someone who may have purchased the vehicle prior to the consumer's effort to locate and tag the vehicle. See column 6, lines 25-30. The reference provides a suggestion of a confirmation request using the contact information, which in this case would be the verification of the customer's order and payment.

In reference to dependent claim 4, Pulliam teaches:

The consumer is then provided an estimated product delivery date. See column 6, lines 35-38.

In reference to dependent claim 5, Pulliam teaches:

The system can optionally include a report process routine for communicating customer trend, preference, and other customer-related data to the provider of the product or products offered for sale. See column 7, lines 1-7.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 12/20/04. have been fully and carefully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues on page 2 of the amendment that the reference does not teach or suggest the limitations of the independent claim. Applicant further states that Pulliam does not disclose the correct type of invitation as disclosed within the specification. The Applicant goes on to describe the type of invitation within the specification is in the form of a ***clickable link*** (which is

not found in the claim) containing text related to the customer's search criterion. The generic nature of the term invitation could be taken many different ways. Furthermore, because the claim limitations are to be given their broadest reasonable interpretation within the scope of the art, there is nothing within the limitation of the claim that would preclude the Examiner from utilizing the Pulliam reference to teach the generation of a target list of customers by those customers who ordered cars through the online site.

The Applicant states that Barrett, the secondary reference, does not provide "customers" in any sense and the chat session initiates automatically. Again, the Examiner notes the broad nature of the limitations within in the independent claim and the term 'target list of customers'. The claim limitation does not preclude the Examiner from utilizing an automatic invitation based on keywords or search criterion from the past. Because the claim limitations are to be given their broadest reasonable interpretation within the scope of the art, the invitation methods taught by Barrett provide a proficient means for combination with the consumer/product methods taught by Pulliam.

Conclusion

7. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

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CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew J. Ludwig whose telephone number is 571-272-4127. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Hong can be reached on 571-272-4124.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ML
March 28, 2005



STEPHEN HONG
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER